

Message Text

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46

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 DHA-02 VO-03

SCA-01 INSE-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 AID-05 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /087 W

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O 120949Z JUL 76

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO AMEMBASSY RANGOON NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1200

USMISSION GENEVA

CINCPAC REP GUAM MARIANAS ISLANDS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, VS, BM

SUBJ: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ON BURMESE VESSEL

REF: HONG KONG 8118

1. CONGEN HAS BEEN URGING ON THE BURMESE CONSUL GENERAL THE NECESSITY FOR THIS GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT WHAT THE BRITISH CALL RESPONSIBILITY OF "TEMPORARY FIRST ASYLUM" FOR THE 99 REFUGEES ABOARD THE MV AVA. WE HAVE NOW BEEN INFORMED BY THE HKG THAT THE BURMESE CONSUL GENERAL HAS TOLD THE HKG THAT HE BELIEVES HIS GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE THIS NECESSARY GUARANTEE. AT THE SAME TIME THE HKG HAS LEARNED FROM THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION WHO IN TURN REPRESENTS HNHCR THAT THE LATTER ORGANIZATION IS NOW PREPARED TO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CARE

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AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MV AVA REFUGEES UNTIL SUCH TIME

AS PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT CAN BE ARRANGED.

2. THE HKG HAS URGED THE BURMESE CONSUL GENERAL TO SUGGEST THAT HIS GOVERNMENT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS GENEROUS OFFER, ESTABLISH A REFUGEE CAMP IN RANGOON, AND REMOVE THE REFUGEES FROM THE MV AVA FOR AIR PASSAGE TO RANGOON. INsofar AS THE AMERICAN OFFER TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF RESETTLEMENT OF SOME OF THE REFUGEES, IT WOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE WHETHER THE REFUGEES WERE IN RANGOON OR SOME WHERE ELSE. (WE CONFIRMED TO HKG THAT THIS WAS CORRECT). FINALLY, HKG ASSURED THE BURMESE CONSUL GENERAL THAT ONCE THE BURMESE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD CONFIRMED TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, RANGOON, THAT THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT WOULD ACCEPT INITIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE REFUGEES, THE HKG WOULD LIFT RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT OF MV AVA INTO HONG KONG HARBOUR AND IT COULD UNLOAD ITS CARGO.

3. WE HAVE NO IDEA WHETHER THIS IS A VIABLE PROPOSITION AS FAR AS RANGOON IS CONCERNED, BUT IN VIEW OF THE HARD-NOSED BRITISH ATTITUDE, THERE WILL HAVE TO BE GIVE ON THE BURMESE SIDE OR THE SHIP WILL BE CONDEMNED TO ENDLESS CIRCLING OUTSIDE HONG KONG UNTIL THE PROBLEM IS TRANSPORTED ELSEWHERE.
CROSS

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